

THE COST OF PUPILS NON-ATTENDANCE AND SCHOOL YEAR REPETITION

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*Keeping pupils in the same class
for a second and a third year,
non-attendance at schools, falling off the
school is not only the problem of
a specific pupil, these are problems of the
education system and the whole state.*

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APPROACH

'First of all, the school forms not a human, not a spirit and not a personality. It forms a future student of a high or a higher school. The ones who forms us do are not embarrassed to admit that and this is the harsh truth. And Lithuania does not need a Man; a man is not necessary for it. Because it is not useful for it. Both the state and the nation do not need humanity, consciousness, and honesty.

I dream about a school where pupils LEARN instead of being bored and wasting their time. And Mozart is never killed there! Such a school is dominated by the notion that each subject is unique and each has a hidden gift, a hidden human genius. The task of the school - to disclose it'.

Giedre Kazlauskaitė, Vilkaviskis humanitarian gymnasium Ziburys
//Mano Svajonių Mokykla, V.: Tito Alba, 1997, p.62.

FACTS....

- 31,100 pupils have been kept in the same class for a second/third year in secondary schools of Lithuania in recent five years (1995-2000).
- Approximately 10 million litas per year were allocated additionally for the education of pupils kept in the same class for a second/third year in Lithuania.
- Keeping of pupils in the same class for a second year boost the probability of dropping out of school from 45 percent to 50 percent, while a repeated repetition of a school class (keeping of a pupil in the same class for a third year) - to 90 percent.
- In accordance with the data of World Bank approximately 20 percent of all funds allocated for education are assigned for pupils kept in the same class for a second year and for those pupils who drop out of school: the public has to invest in future of such individuals later.
- In 1999 3,300 minors (of 14-17 years of age) were charged with crimes. Minors formed 13 percent of all accused.
- In 1999 almost two thirds of people who committed a crime did not work or study.
- Jobless rate among the youth in 1997-1999 exceeded the average of the state by 1.5-2 times. The biggest jobless rate was registered within the group of people of 14-19 years of age.
- In terms of education in the beginning of 2000 50 percent of all unemployed were non-qualified jobless people under 25 years of age.
- At the district of Didziasalis people with only primary education, i.e. people who have not graduated from comprehensive school and integration of whom into the labour market is a serious problem, formed almost one fourth (23 percent) of all jobless in the beginning of 2000.

INTRODUCTION

Information society under creation poses increasingly higher requirements to abilities, knowledge and competence of each individual. Therefore, it is extremely important that the education system could raise a highly motivated citizen ready to study continuously and take active part in social, cultural, economic and political life of the public. On the other hand, economic development, competitive society forms preconditions for a more marked differentiation of members of the public. Probability that a part of members of the public will be left on the sidelines increases continuously. Therefore, today the public is divided into a group of people with enough abilities, knowledge and competence and a group of people without abilities, knowledge or competence.

In the opinion of economists, the efficiency of education system is measured by the relation between the numbers of pupils who start learning and graduate from school. i.e., if the learning of pupils is linked with the lowest expenses and accompanied by graduation of the biggest number of pupils with sufficient education required for the society. Extenuation of the period of (self) development when a pupil is kept in the same class for the second year or he/she drops out of school proves that education system of such a state is not efficient enough.

One of the key dangers in the current world is the fact that people who drop out of the education system do not take part in the life of the state. Each country suffers smaller or bigger losses when citizens thereof do not take part in the education system, i.e. they have not attended school; they have attended school but have dropped out; they have been kept in the same class for a second year; they have not received a school graduation document (a graduation certificate or a graduation diploma), i.e. they do not have education required for successful participation in the life of society and for integration in the labour market. There is a marked probability that such individuals who have not taken part in the education system may fall into such groups of social layers, which will result in the citizen dropping out of the "normal" society.

In accordance with the data provided by World Bank approximately 20 percent of all funds allocated for education are assigned to pupils kept in the same class for a second year or to pupils dropping out of school: the public has to invest in future of such individuals later (Haddad W.D. et al., 1990). After leaving school young people with no proper education and with negative approach towards studying are less willing to study all life long. Therefore, they face the key problem in their lives later and live it through as a result because losses of their studying become long-term both to themselves and the society. They find it more complicated to participate in life of the society due to their uneducated ness. Furthermore, social and economic unsafety grows too: the probability to be stricken off the competitive labour market increases, in other words, such individuals face a constant threat of unemployment and probability to fall into low social layers grows. Therefore, the state needs to implement such an education policy that would reduce losses of the education system and "chances" of a part of citizens to fall into low social layers through the implementation of preventive measures that would halt the formation and expansion of new low social layers. Search for ways to decrease these losses of the education system is the urgent priority of the education system of each state as only a well-educated public may be open and democratic.

The goal of this report has nothing to do with providing of comprehensive answers why pupils do not attend school or with calculating those who have not been calculated for. This report aims to stimulate discussions, which, I believe, will dictate wise solutions to education politicians.

Questions for discussions

- Do we have the notion of success and failure at school?
- What do we expect from keeping a pupil in the same class for a second year?
Does it cost much to us?
- Does it suffice to calculate the number of pupils not attending the school under the 16 years of age?
- What minimal education would suffice to a citizen of Lithuania?
- Do we have any policy for turning individuals who dropped out of the education system back to the system?

THE NOTION OF FAILURE AT SCHOOL

Failures at school and dropout of the education system may be analysed in various aspects, including pedagogical, psychological, social, economic, etc. The analysis of research carried out by the author of this report as well as personal experience in consulting pupils prove that majority of pupils who "fall off" the school have to descend the following "stairs" of a drop-out of school step by step:

- complicated tasks that could not be understood at times;
- insufficiently developed abilities and skills combined with insufficient knowledge;
- difficulties in learning;
- low achievements in the learning process;
- negative reaction and attitude of the teacher;
- lack of confidence of a pupil in himself/herself that has replaced assessment of himself/herself and self-respect;
- negative motivation of learning;
- negative emotions, unacceptable behaviour of the pupil, growing aggression towards school;
- constant failures in learning, ailments, difficulties;
- playing truant;
- second examinations, keeping in the same class for a second/third year;
- frequent changing of schools;
- lengthy absence from school;
- drop-out of school.

If a part of the aforementioned stages is related with the personality of the pupil, his/her relations with teachers, coevals, the school, then ***the keeping of a pupil in the same class for a second/third year, non-attendance of school, "drop-out" of school are the problems of a specific pupil as well as the education system and the whole state***. Furthermore, a certain share of these problems requires political solutions alongside solutions on the school or regional level.

In June 1992 the presidency of Portugal organised a meeting of high officials of education ministries that focused on assessment of "failures at school". Participants of the meeting found out that the notion of "a failure at school" was defined in a different way in various states. (Measures to combat..., 1994).

Within the context of the education system of **Denmark** the "failure at school" is defined as a discrepancy between natural strengths of a pupil, his/her abilities and the ability to learn. Alongside other pupils this definition embraces the group of pupils who drop out of the education system in the end of mandatory schooling though the Danish schools do not apply the system of keeping a pupil in the same class for a second year within the first nine years of mandatory schooling.

Within the education systems of **England, Wales and Northern Ireland** the term of "a failure at school" is not used as it is replaced by the notion of "low achievements", which demonstrates that a pupil fails to develop his/her individual strengths successfully.

The education system of **Scotland** accentuates individual difficulties and disabilities (intellectual, physical, emotional, social, etc.) in learning and/or improper programmes or methods of training more often than the "failures at school". Pupils are calculated after the age of graduation of school.

The notion of a "failure at school" within the education system of **France** embraces those individuals who have left school without any qualification. Furthermore, failures

are determined within the course of a school year through the assessment of difficulties of the pupils in learning, which prevent them from achieving the level of individual abilities and the level of knowledge characteristic of a specific age. Usually this is an index that encompasses the percentage of pupils repeating a learning course.

In **Greece** the term of a "failure at school" designates insufficient achievements of pupils in comparison with goals outlined in the programmes of their upbringing. The achievements are assessed by illiteracy and drop-out from school.

In **Portugal** the notion of "failures at school" embraces pupils who fail to achieve goals specified for each year of learning. Following criteria are applied for the definition of such pupils: repetition of a learning course, drop-out of school, expulsion from school, and "failure at examinations".

In **Italy** the "failure at school" designates inability to obtain the main knowledge and develop abilities. "Failures at school" are usually determined through calculation of pupils who repeated a learning course or were expelled from school.

In **Spain** "failures at school" are defined by the following term: "individual difficulties trying to achieve general goals set out for the basic school". Usually the percentage of pupils who have failed the examinations is calculated.

In **Germany** the notion of a "failure at school" has not been defined clearly. Failures at school are interpreted as a repetition of a learning course or a "drop-out" of school.

The laws of the **Netherlands** accentuate that "a pupil shall make a progress by competing with himself/herself". Therefore, the notion of "failures at school" in this country is defined by the term "dropped out of the education system too early".

In **Ireland** the notion of a "failure at school" is not applied, as the term of "low achievements" is wide-spread in that state.

The notion of a "failure at school" at the education system of **Luxembourg** is not defined clearly. This phenomenon is described by the following terms: "repetition of a learning course", "dropped out of school" and "low results of development".

In **Belgium** the "failure at school" is described by the term of "knowledge goals that have not been achieved". Repetition of a learning course is the main criterion for evaluation.

Practically the notion of "failures at school" has not been used in **Lithuania**. Usually this phenomenon is defined through revelation of various aspects thereof. Recently the notions of "learning inabilities" (learning derangement, learning problems, learning difficulties) have entered the use. Furthermore, calculations are made of pupils, who do not attend school, repeat a learning course (are kept in the same class for a second/third year), have dropped out of school or have been expelled from school.

The aforementioned examples prove that the usage of notions of a "failure at school" used in various states and under consideration in this chapter depends on goals specified for the education system. A precise or foreseen "norm of success" may depend largely on the traditions of upbringing, on the requirements to the content and plans of upbringing, methods and evaluation of upbringing. Therefore, deviations from the norm that emerge due to failures may be ascribed to different reasons.

Therefore, in some cases individual efforts of a pupil related with individual abilities of a pupil and his/her progress in comparison with his/her achievements over a certain period of time are accentuated. In other cases pupils are ranked in accordance with their achievements on the basis of set standards of achievements and/or are compared with the results set out in the standards or are compared in-between.

To sum up, we may state that the difference in definitions of the notion of a "failure at school" depends on the goals, which are the core of the education system of one or another state:

- difficulties in learning lying in the development of a child;
- standards of achievements of pupils set out by the education system of a state;
- difficulties in learning lying in the development of a child and standards of achievements of pupils set out by the education system of a state.

REPETITION OF A CLASS AT SCHOOL: PROS AND CONS?

Experience of European states

In education systems of the European states problems with pupils with difficulties in learning are solved in different ways. In some states pupils who fail to achieve the sufficient level of knowledge and abilities specified in the programme of development and who do not succeed to get a respective maturity in the end of a school year are left to repeat the course. This decision is taken by a teacher or by a team of teachers. Majority of European states have shown a tendency of reduction in the number of pupils repeating a learning course since 1990.

Analysis of the data provided by UNESCO shows that repetition of a learning course in the European states is more characteristic of Eastern and Central European post-Communist states. For example, in accordance with the data available in 1995 a learning course was repeated by 1 percent of pupils in the Czech Republic and Hungary, 3 percent of pupils in Estonia. In 1996 a learning course was repeated by 1 percent of pupils in Belarus, Lithuania and Slovenia, 2 percent of pupils in Slovakia and 3 percent of pupils in Bulgaria and Romania ('99 UNESCO Statistical..., 1999).

In accordance with the education data of the European Union (Key data... 1997, 2000) a learning course in **Greece, Portugal and Liechtenstein** could be repeated only in cases of exception. These cases vary greatly in different states ranging from absence at school for a lengthy period of time within the school year to a respective recommendation by an individual or a group of individuals (a psychologist, doctor, social officer, etc.). In such a case the decision is taken by the director of the school and the parents of the pupil.

In **Spain and France** a learning course could be repeated only in the end of the primary, basic, etc. learning centre.

In **Denmark*, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Norway** pupils are promoted automatically each year through the whole period of mandatory education. If they meet any difficulties in learning they get respective support.

To sum up, we may state that the following order of promotion to a higher grade existed in the European states in 1995-1996 and 1997-1998:

- pupils are promoted from one grade to another automatically;
- pupils are kept to repeat a learning course only in cases of exception;
- a learning course could be repeated only in the end of the learning centre (primary, basic, etc.);
- a learning course could be repeated each year.

Additional remarks

In **Belgium** a learning course may be repeated only once or twice per six years at the primary school.

In **Denmark** a learning course could be repeated in the order of exception, i.e. provided that special reasons are defined and the support to be provided to a child during the repetition of the course is believed to be of great benefit.

In **Germany and Austria** pupils are promoted from the 1st grade to the 2nd grade automatically. Starting from the 2nd grade they are promoted or are kept to repeat the learning course depending on achievements of pupils.

In **Bulgaria** pupils are kept to repeat a learning course with the exception of 1st grade pupils. If the 1st grade pupils meet any difficulties in learning, special summer courses are organised.

In **Estonia** pupils are left to repeat a learning course at the 1st or the 2nd grade only in cases of exception (e.g. due to medical reasons).

In **Hungary** pupils are promoted from the 1st grade to the 2nd automatically. Later they may opt to repeat a learning course if they fail to achieve the level of achievements required.

Situation in Lithuania

In **Lithuania** a learning course may be repeated each school year, however, the order of promotion to a higher grade is corrected each year. Issues of promotion of pupils with unsatisfactory annual achievements in certain subjects to a higher grade are considered by the council of pedagogues, which analyses the reasons for lagging behind in learning, the work of the class teacher and teachers with the pupil. Such a pupil is assigned additional tasks, the results of which are considered by the council of pedagogues alongside with the question of promotion of the pupil to a higher grade. Resolution of the council of pedagogues is adopted with consideration of requests of parents of the pupil, proposals by teachers of the aforementioned subjects and class teachers.

The data provided in the table No. 1 and the histogram disclose that the number of pupils kept at the same class for a second year at comprehensive schools has been decreasing on annual basis in recent five years (1995-2000). In 1995-1996 the number of pupils kept at the same class for a second year made up 8,100, while by 1999-2000 the number of such pupils decreased by half or to 4,100 children. Majority of pupils kept at the same class for a second/third year studied at 5th-10th (9th) grades, while the least pupils studied at 11th (10th) - 12th grades during the aforementioned period. The percentage of pupils kept at the same class for a second/third year narrowed from 1.6 percent to 0.7 percent in the period of five years, which complied with the tendencies of the development of education systems of the European states ('99 UNESCO Statistical..., 1999). On the other hand, as many as 31,100 pupils have been kept at the same class for a second/third year at comprehensive school in recent five years.

Table No. 1 and a histogram. The number of pupils who are kept in the same class for a second and a third year (in thousands, at the beginning of the school year).*

	Study at the same class for the second or the third year, in thousands				
	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000
Total	8,1	7,5	6,4	5	4,1
1 st -4 th grades	3,0	3,0	2,5	2,1	1,7
5 th - 10 th grades	4,9	4,4	3,7	2,8	2,4
11 th - 12 th grades	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,04

* Education. A statistical digest, 1998, 1999, 2000

Pupils who study at the same class for the second and the third year (in percents in comparison with the number of all pupils as of the beginning of the school year).

	In comparison with the number of all pupils, in percent				
	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000
Total	1,6	1,4	1,2	0,9	0,7
1 st -4 th grades	1,4	1,4	1,1	0,9	0,8
5 th - 10 th grades	2,1	1,9	1,5	1,1	0,8
11 th - 12 th grades	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,10

* Education. A statistical digest, 1998, 1999, 2000

Table No. 2. The number of pupils kept in the same class for a second and a third year in accordance with grades

Grade	1997 – 1998 m.m.			1998 – 1999 m.m.			1999 – 2000 m.m.		
	Total number of children	Pupils kept in the same class for a second year	Pupils kept in the same class for a third year	Total number of children	Pupils kept in the same class for a second year	Pupils kept in the same class for a third year	Total number of children	Pupils kept in the same class for a second year	Pupils kept in the same class for a third year
Pre-school grade	4283	32	-	6378	56	-	7049	-	-
1 st grade	55910	1128	44	54373	998	22	53489	923	12
2 nd grade	53240	430	13	54752	299	13	53435	250	8
3 rd grade	53691	438	22	53109	298	19	54706	243	11
4 th grade	55340	419	42	53603	322	23	52964	202	21
Total:	222464	2447	121	222215	1973	77	221643	1618	52
5 th grade	54784	427	70	55354	361	53	53618	298	45
6 th grade	53588	691	87	54782	540	67	55376	486	51
7 th grade	50862	735	72	53006	569	42	54429	527	45
8 th grade	44340	795	33	49956	615	37	52374	598	26
9 th grade	39616	824	17	40345	523	18	41035	300	5
10 th grade	22138	92	1	24021	40	-	33203	52	-
Total:	265328	3564	280	277464	2648	217	290035	2261	172
11 th grade	22870	60	1	20544	20	-	22517	29	-
12 th grade	19321	10	-	22284	7	-	19882	7	-
Total:	42191	70	1	42828	27	-	42399	36	-
Gymnasium classes:	3935	-	-	5180	-	-	7066	3	-
1 st grade	3305	-	-	4334	-	-	5859	-	-
2 nd grade	3007	1	-	3229	1	-	4316	-	-
3 rd grade	1902	-	-	2910	-	-	3168	-	-
4 th grade	12149	1	-	15653	1	-	20409	3	-
Total:	542132	6082	402	558160	4649	294	574486	3918	224

The data provided in the table No. 2 illustrate distribution of pupils repeating a learning course in accordance with grades. Majority of children are left to repeat a learning course at the 1st grade (though some children are left to repeat a learning course at pre-school grades as well). Pupils of the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grades of a basic school are kept at the same class for a second/third year most often. Analysis by the author of this report has unveiled that pupils of the aforementioned grades tend not to attend school (for several months and even for a half a year) the most, though this part of pupils usually is included in the list of comprehensive schools. (Dereskevicius P., Rimkeviciene V., Targamadze V., 2000).

WHAT IS THE COST OF REPETITION OF A CLASS AT SCHOOL FOR THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF LITHUANIA?

Keeping of pupils at the same class for a second/third year usually is linked with failures of a pupil at school. Repetition of the learning course is expected to enable the pupil to achieve better results and to learn further successfully. Teachers and parents have created a myth that keeping of pupils at the same class for a second/third year will improve his/her achievements, which will create conditions for successful studies in future. However, costs of keeping of pupils at the same class for a second/third year are calculated rarely. Do those costs buy themselves out at all?

Costs of keeping of pupils at the same class for a second year are composed of:

- additional time of a pupil;
- additional time of education at school;
- additional number of teachers;
- additional number of classes;
- additional number of textbooks and other learning materials;
- funds allocated for repeated maintenance of the pupil at school, etc.

Table No. 3. Ordinary expenses allocated for secondary school pupils kept in the same class for a second and a third year in the school years of 1995-1999.*

School year	Regular expenses per one pupil, in Litas	The number of pupils kept in the same class for a second/third year, in thousands	Regular expenses allocated for pupils kept in the same class for a second/third year, in Litas
1995-1996	1139,0	8,1	9 225 900
1996-1997	1342,0	7,5	10 065 000
1997-1998	1845,0	6,4	11 808 000
1998-1999	2065,4	5,0	10 327 000
1999-2000	2295,5	4,1	9 411 550

** Education. A statistical digest, 1998, 1999, 2000; Expenses of local authorities of cities and regions on education in 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, IPC.*

In accordance with rough calculations by the author of the report (see the table No.3), in last five years regular expenses on the financing of pupils kept in the same class for a second/third year formed approximately 10 million litas per year on average, i.e. 50.8 million litas in the period of five years.

These losses often turn into long-term losses: possibilities of such people to proceed with studies are limited; furthermore, such individuals become unemployed more often.

Efficiency of activities of school should be evaluated both by the number of graduates who enter higher schools and by the contingent of pupils a school has to work with and the achieved results as well.

To sum up, we may state that on condition that at least a part or all funds allocated for the repetition of a learning course could be employed for additional consulting of pupils, diagnostics and correction of failures in learning, i.e. for the financing of quality of (self) education at school, the costs would be less significant both to a specific individual and to the state.

DOES REPETITION OF A SCHOOL CLASS IS HELPFUL TO A PUPIL? IS IT HELP OR LOSSES?

Keeping of pupils at the same class for a second/third year incurs sufficient costs to the state, the education system. Does it buy itself out to the pupil himself/herself in social and psychological meaning?

Majority of studies (Eisemon T.O., 1998, Measures to combat..., 1994, etc.) highlight the connection between repetition of a learning course and the drop-out of school. The aforementioned two factors are related with characteristics of a child and his/her family, conditions for (self)-education at school, high professional skills of teachers, the education system and policy of the state (e.g. in scales of repetition of learning courses). Usually repetition of a learning course is assessed as a result of failures in learning, failed examinations, poor attendance or insufficient possibilities provided by the education system of the local level.

On the other hand, the percentage of pupils kept at the same class for a second year at developing countries is linked with social economic situation of the state, inability of the education system to create conditions for a more considerable number of individuals to aspire for further education. Due to this reason keeping of pupils at the same class for a second year allows to differentiate pupils in accordance with their abilities and possibilities as the state cannot ensure possibilities to receive higher education to the majority of its citizens. Numerous studies have unveiled that the major impact on repetition of a learning course is produced by the situation in family, i.e. family income, the age of children, catering and the health of children, preparedness of a child for school, the language used in the family. Furthermore, the relation between the native language and preparedness for school have been noticed: the ability to communicate in the language of teaching at a school may be developed at home, while difficulties in learning might be related with the use of different languages at school and at home as well as with poor environment at home. However, though repetition of a learning course might be related more closely with poverty in grades of basic school, the importance of this reason seems to die out in later years and in higher grades.

Numerous studies (Wasted opportunities..., 1998) have proved that keeping of a pupil at the same class for a second year makes a negative impact on psychosocial development of the pupil. Repetition of a learning course does not result in acquisition of academic fundamental, most often a child does not try to make a progress. He/she faces problems of self-esteem and develops a negative attitude towards school instead. Early keeping of a pupil at the same class for a second year usually stimulates to repeat learning courses and drop out of school eventually.

For example, the report produced by Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development says that the only repetition of a learning course (keeping of a pupil at the same class for a second year) boost probability of dropping out of school from 45 percent to 50 percent, while a repeated repetition of the same learning course (keeping of the pupil at the same class for a third year) boost that probability to as much as 90 percent because being the eldest pupil at a new class provides possibilities to break off the relations with the previous class, which stimulates dropping out of school eventually. That is, repetition of a learning course by a pupil results in derangement of the natural cycle of social and intellectual development of the child. Development of personality is a continuous manifold process, however, at times it is far from an even process. Therefore, the structure of school that support continuous advance of a pupil serves his needs better even if his/her advance is insignificant.

Only teachers of underdeveloped and developing states require to assign additional time for the repetition of a learning course and repeated studying of materials, which the child has failed to perceive at first. Usually repetition of a learning course is seen as

"medicine" for pupils with slow learning abilities. Therefore, repetition of a learning course is widely used at the 1st grade under arguments of the necessity to ensure proper beginning of the process of education. As we have already mentioned, repetition of learning courses after the completion of one concentre and shift to another concentre is widely used (for example, after the promotion from the primary school to the basic school). Some states apply systems of automatic promotion to a higher grade, i.e. pupils are promoted to a higher grade even in cases when they fail to reach the required level of achievements. Application of such a system is attributed to the motive that a child will not learn the subject during the second year at the same class if he/she has failed to do that during the first year.

Neither of the aforementioned methods of promotion of pupils to higher grades is not efficient enough: automatic promotion will improve only general indices of the education system of the state, while keeping a pupil to repeat a learning course makes a negative impact on the development of personality of the pupil. What is the way out? Continuous provision of additional support and provision of possibilities to proceed with studies with coevals through the creation of leveling programmes, personalisation of (self)-education and application of strategies for the reduction of the number of pupils kept at the same class for a second year is seen as the most prudent way to treat pupils with difficulties in learning.

We would suggest that a considerable part of strategies on the reduction of the number of pupils kept at the same class for a second year, put forward by Eisemon T.O. (1998) is acceptable to Lithuania. Eisemon T.O. provides generalisation of approaches of various authors. The aforementioned strategies are oriented to investments that should be directed both to families and to schools.

The following goals are set for the provision of support to families:

- to improve social justice;
- to boost responsibility of school;
- to improve preparedness of children for school.

Following are the proposal for the sphere of politics:

- to cut taxes;
- to strengthen the impact of parents on management of school;
- to strengthen the control over finances of school.

We would suggest to invest into:

- provision of benefits to impoverished families;
- training of members (including parents) of a school council in general activities;
- organisation of education programmes for parents;
- organisation of health and catering programmes in the society;
- organisation of programmes on upbringing of infants.

The following goals are suggested to be set for school in a drive to reduce the number of pupils kept at the same class for a second year:

- to improve preparedness for school;
- to improve attendance;
- to boost possibilities to learn and teach;
- to improve the system of evaluation.

Following are the proposals for the sphere of education policy that should give a helping hand in achievement of the aforementioned goals:

- to determine earlier age for the initiation of institutional upbringing of children;
- to strive to make the state support pre-school upbringing;
- to implement the law on mandatory attendance of school;
- to merge financing of a school with attendance of pupils; to provide financing with consideration of the results of activities of the institution;
- to decrease or eliminate taxes levied on schools;
- to cut the number of pupils at classes;
- to extend the school year at schools or the period of activities during the day time;
- to create conditions for teachers for improvement of their professional skills;
- to strengthen supervision of teachers and schools;
- to supply free textbooks and other learning materials for children of impoverished families;
- to introduce modern programmes of upbringing;
- to introduce the optimal system of evaluation and a wise system for promotion of pupils to a higher grade, etc.

We would suggest to make investments into:

- pre-school programmes;
- catering (breakfast/lunch) programmes;
- improvement of hygiene conditions;
- reconstruction of schools and classes;
- optimisation of delivery of pupils to school and distribution of schools;
- arrangement of new programmes of upbringing, textbooks and other learning materials;
- training of teachers and improvement of their professional skills;
- training of teachers/consultants, directors of schools, inspectors;
- improvement of provision of textbooks and the system of distribution thereof;
- creation of a system of evaluation and examinations.

THE NUMBER OF PUPILS NOT ATTENDING THE SCHOOL. THE PROBLEM?

Approach to the problem in foreign states

Usually the education statistics calculate the percentage of drop-out from school. For example, in the USA this term is used for the description of individuals who have left school prior to graduation and for the definition of the status of individuals who do not attend school and have not graduated from school. For example, movement from a state school to a private one is not considered the drop-out from school. An individual who dropped out of school (i.e. who does not attend school) may turn back to school later and graduate from it, however, he is described as non-attending school at the moment he/she leaves school. When such a person turns back to school he or she is defined as a stopout (Snyder T.D., Hoffman Ch.M., Geddes C.M., 1999).

The index of school drop-outs is distinguished among sixteen quality indices in the report on quality of education in a European school in the European Union documents. This index embraces three sub-groups of individuals:

- Children and adults who have fell out of school prior to obtaining the mandatory education provided by school;
- Children and individuals who have not acquired any qualification at the end of the mandatory education period;
- Individuals who have no professional qualification after the leaving of school.

"Drop-outs of the education system" is a part of population of 18-24 years of age with education lower than secondary (the second stage of comprehensive education, ISCED 2nd level) or even lower education who does not continue any studies (do not attend any secondary or vocational schools). A 1997 research into labour force (EUROSTAT) unveiled that treatment of this index varied in different states of the European Union, accordingly, it is rather complicated to compare the data. On the other hand, the percentage of "drop-outs of the education system" indicated by the European Union states is rather significant - 22.5 percent. The lowest figures are provided by all Central and Eastern European states and Scandinavian states: Sweden, Finland, and Norway. Education system of the latter country (Norway) embraces less mechanisms of selection and provides more optimal possibilities to get the education required during various periods of life of an individual. Furthermore, the EU states carried out an analysis, which allowed to review measures applied by those states for aiding young people (from 15 to 29 years of age) who had suspended studies and had no proper education (European Union ..., 1997).

The importance of individuals "who have dropped out of the education system" in Europe was further proved by the resolution of the European Council adopted in Lisbon in March 2000 to cut the number of individuals of 18-24 years with only comprehensive education by half by the year 2010.

Situation in Lithuania

Calculation of pupils under 16 years of age not attending school and formation of conditions for the returning to the education system is only the top of the iceberg in Lithuania in solving the problems of the youth dropped out of the education system. This problem is related both with the obtaining of mandatory education, which ranges from comprehensive to high in different European states and with a possibility to return to the education system at any moment and a possibility to study all live long in case of necessity.

Major focus in Lithuania is paid on non-attendance of secondary school by children under 16 years of age because pupils shall obtain comprehensive education or study until they turn 16 in compliance with the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania.

Table No. 4. Number of pupils and students falling off education institutions.*

School year	The number of pupils and students falling off per one school year	The percentage of "drop-outs"	The number of pupils and students falling of due to non-advancement, in percent
Daily secondary schools			
1991 - 1992	10057	2.1	10.8
1992 - 1993	11089	2.2	10.9
1993 - 1994	4473	0.9	14.2
1994 - 1995	6263	1.2	5.2
1995 - 1996	6706	1.3	6.2
1996 - 1997	6081	1.2	7.0
1997 - 1998	5108	0.9	5.2
1998 - 1999	5127	0.9	8.3
Vocational schools			
1991 - 1992	3871	...	61.1
1992 - 1993	4856	11.4	36.0
1993 - 1994	4579	9.9	35.7
1994 - 1995	3840	8.4	38.7
1995 - 1996	4163	8.4	38.9
1996 - 1997	4730	9.1	36.7
1997 - 1998	4896	9.0	43.0
1998 - 1999	5144	9.1	39.3
High schools			
1991 - 1992	4086	10.9	64.3
1992 - 1993	3060	10.2	57.1
1993 - 1994	2400	10.1	57.8
1994 - 1995	2736	11.5	40.1
1995 - 1996	2554	10.4	57.6
1996 - 1997	2967	10.9	62.5
1997 - 1998	4126	13.4	50.0
1998 - 1999	3023	8.8	66.2
Higher schools			
1991 - 1992	7115	11.5	61.8
1992 - 1993	6684	11.8	63.7
1993 - 1994	6332	12.7	63.7
1994 - 1995	6166	11.7	56.5
1995 - 1996	5358	9.6	55.0
1996 - 1997	6542	10.9	66.2
1997 - 1998	7227	10.5	55.1
1998 - 1999	8542	11.1	48.5

** Without the number of pupils and students who moved to other schools of the same type.. Education. A statistical digest, 2000.*

Data of the table No. 4 proves that a relatively significant part of pupils leave education institutions each year. Each type of education institutions loses a part of students who have been subject to certain investments. In recent nine years this figure has ranged from 5,000 to 11,000 at daily secondary school, from 4,000 to 5,000 at vocational schools, from 3,000 to 4,000 students at high schools and from 5,000 to 8,500 students at higher schools. The figures unveil that in almost 54,900 pupils left daily secondary

schools in 1991-1999, 36,000 students left vocational schools, 24,900 students left high schools and almost 53,900 students left higher schools. There no statistical data available that could allow to determine the part of the aforementioned individuals who have turned back to the education system to continue studies. On the other hand, these data show losses of our education system and prompt to search for reasons and optimal methods of prevention of dropping out of the education system as well as for possibilities to continue studies at various periods of life of an individual.

Table No. 5. Shifts of pupils and the results of a school year at secondary schools*

	1995 -1996	1996 -1997	1998 -1999	1999 -2000
Removed from school				
Including:	539	501	339	505
Non-advanced	413	426	266	425
For violations of the law	126	75	73	80
Number of pupils in the end of a school year, in thousands				
Including (percents)	513,9	526,7	541,4	554,8
Granted a remove	98,0	98,4	98,9	99,1
Kept in he same class	2,0	1,6	1,1	0,9

** Education. A statistical digest, 2000.*

The table No. 5 provides the data that encompasses the shifts of pupils within a school year. The figures show that the number of pupils removed from schools decreased by almost one-third in 1998-1999. Furthermore, the number of pupils removed from school for violation of the law reduced as well, if compared with the total number of pupils. On the other hand, the data of the table No. 6 shows that only about three-fourths of pupils (if compared with the number of residents of 15 years of age) graduate from the 9th grade and only about a half of pupils (if compared with the number of residents of 18 years of age) obtain secondary education. It proves once more that the executive authorities shall calculate the number of children and youngsters dropping out of the education system.

Table No.6*. School graduates at secondary schools

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Graduated from the 9th grade	37969	41945	38393	41587	...
At daily school	37483	41278	37659	40914	...
At continuation schools	486	667	734	673	...
If compared with the number of residents of 15 years of age, in percent	72,1	79,7	72,2	78,5	...
Graduated from the secondary school	19915	21072	22691	23220	27740
Daily	18359	19161	20286	20541	24649
Continuation	1556	1911	2405	2679	3091
If compared with the number of residents of 18 years of age, in percent	38,4	40,6	43,7	44,5	52,9
Number of pupils who have heard the course of the secondary school but have not received the school leaving certificate	523	267	240	332	243
At daily schools	207	174	152	245	174
At continuation schools	316	93	88	87	69

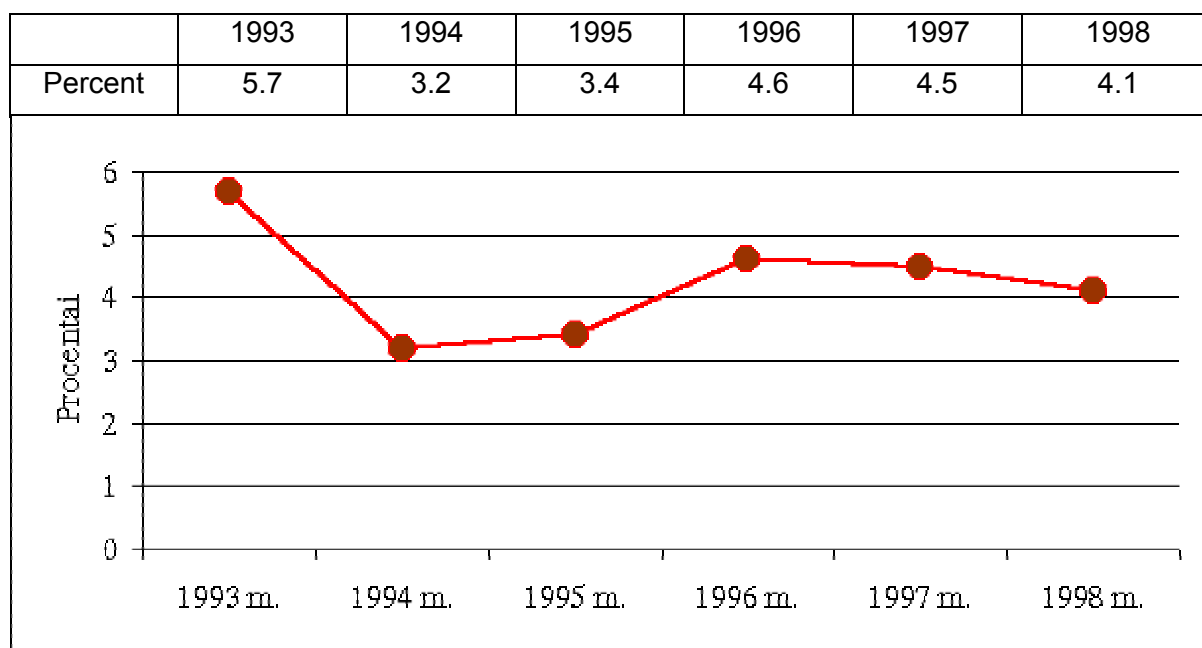
* *Education. A statistical digest, 2000.*

Calculation of all pupils not attending school is a complicated task, which the education system has hardly been able to implement. We may expect to get more precise data after the census of the year 2001 and arrangement of the order of entitlement of personal codes to children of school age under 16 years of age. In accordance with another option we should wait until children born after 1992 when entitlement of personal codes to the newborns was launched fill in the secondary schools completely. Accordingly, we may calculate precisely the number of 7- and 8-year-olds at secondary schools at present. Before the aforementioned terms we may base our studies on two sources of statistical data, namely, the Department of Statistics under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Ministry of Education and Science. However, the data and calculation methods applied by the two aforementioned institutions differ.

In accordance with the data of evaluation by experts of the Department of Statistics under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the share of children not attending school formed 5.7 percent in 1993 and 4.1 percent in 1998 (see chart No. 1) in comparison with the number of residents of 7-15 years of age. The number of children not attending school is produced in accordance with the results of calculations by experts: this is a difference between the number of the youth of age obligatory for studying at school (7-15 years) and the number of the youth of the same age studying at all secondary, vocational, higher and high schools.

Therefore, in accordance with calculations by experts, e.g. in 1998-1999 96 percent of children and adolescents of 7-15 years of age studied at various types of schools, while 21,000 children and adolescents (4 percent) did not attend school. The share of the youth not attending school has been narrowing slightly in recent three years. However, on average 5,000 of seven-year-olds do not arrive to school each year further. Moreover, a similar number of pupils drop out from the 1st - 9th grades each year (Social Development of Lithuania, 2000, p. 28).

Chart No. 1*. The part of children not attending the school (if compared with the number of residents of 7-15 years of age, in percent).



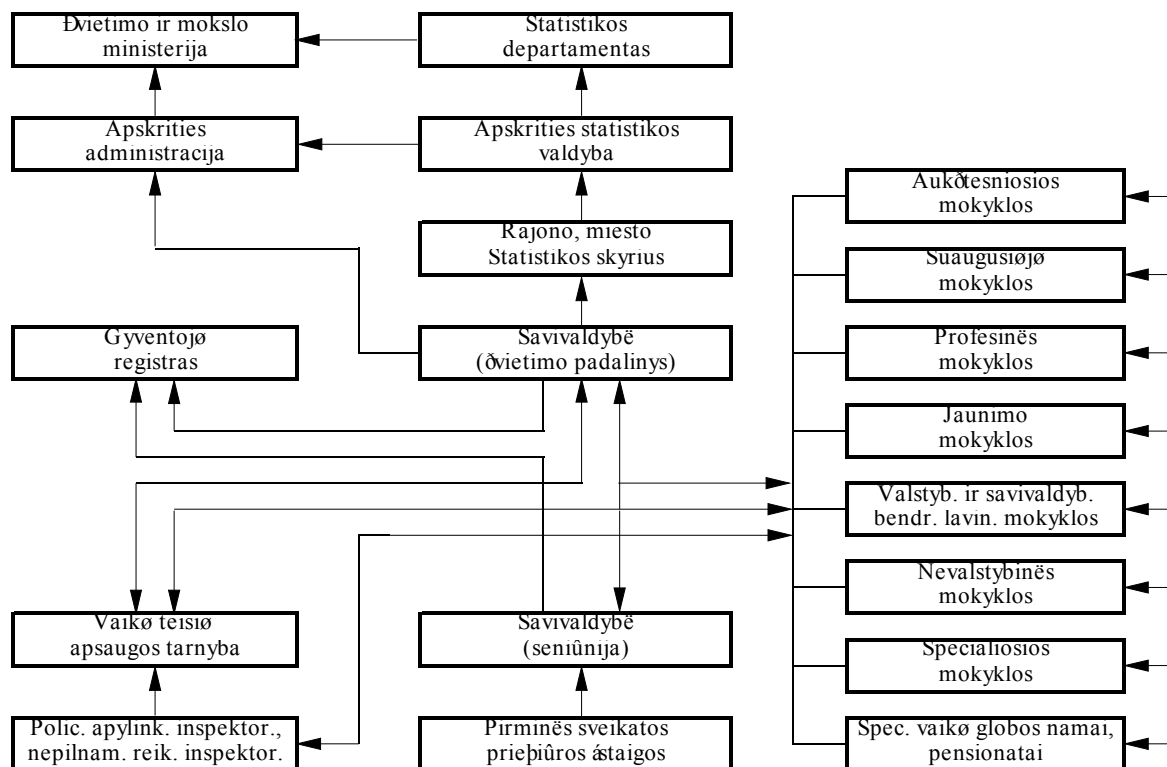
* *Social development in Lithuania. Department of Statistics, 2000.*

Under the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science in 1994 the government passed the resolution No. 389 on the accounting of children of school age, which obliged heads of districts and mayors of cities and towns to produce lists with names of children under 16 years of age to school located on their territories by June 1 each year. Furthermore, the district heads and mayors were obliged to provide separate lists for each year of birth. In 1995 the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania adopted amendments to the Law on Education, which specified responsibility for children not attending schools at the level of education administration.

In 1997 the government passed the resolution No. 889 on confirmation of the order of accounting of children of school age under 16 years of age. In compliance with this resolution pupils not attending school are the pupils who might be stricken off lists of pupils under a respective proposals of the council of teachers, a respective resolution of the school council and under a respective written agreement of the education division (founder). Furthermore, this group of pupils encompasses children who should attend school in accordance with the data of the school but do not do that. The resolution specified the order of accounting of children under 16 years of age not attending school. The scheme of the collection of data formed in accordance with the aforementioned document might be illustrated in the following way (see figure No. 1):

Figure No. 1. The scheme of accounting children under 16 years of age not attending the school

Mokyklos nelankančių vaikų iki 16 metų apskaitos schema



From the top to the bottom

The 1st column: Ministry of Education and Science - Administration of the district - Registry of residents - Children's Rights Protection Agency - District police inspector, children's officer.

The 2nd column: Department of Statistics - Regional Statistical Board - Statistical office of a region, a city - Local authorities (an office in charge of education) - Local authorities (lower level) - Primary health care institutions.

The 3rd column: Higher schools - Continuation schools - Vocational schools - Schools for the youth - State and municipal secondary schools - Non-state schools - Special schools - Special children foster houses, pensions.

In accordance with the aforementioned order of data collection 1,564 pupils (including 267 pupils with disability) did not attend school in 1997, 1,305 pupils (including 485 pupils with disability) did not attend school in 1998 and 824 pupils (including 309 pupils with disability) - in 1999.

Introduction of the accounting of pupils was accompanied by registration of reasons for non-attendance of schools. Though the number of pupils not attending school has been decreasing in recent years, the data produced by the Ministry of Education and Science (see table No. 7) prove that the dominating reason for non-attendance of school - unwillingness to learn - still remains the key reason, which has been indicated by more than one-third of pupils (38.2 percent in 1997, 38.9 percent in 1998 and 43.7 percent in 1999). Other reasons for non-attendance of school did not change much within the period under review: in 1997 the second most common reason for non-attendance of school was a dysfunctional family, the third reason was poor state of health, the fourth - prohibition of parents and the fifth - complicated financial situation.

In 1998 and 1999 the second most common reason was other reasons, the third - prohibition of parents, the fourth - a dysfunctional family, the fifth - tramping. The findings show that the most common reasons for non-attendance of school are related closely with motivation of a pupil to study and the situation in the family. We may draw a conclusion that alongside low motivation to study prohibition of parents to attend school, life at a dysfunctional family and tramping are the key reasons that are related with the social economic situation of a pupil and his/her family.

Table No. 7. Reasons for non-attendance of school of children under 16 years of age non attending the school.*

Reasons for non-attendance	October 1, 1997	October 1, 1998	October 1, 1999
Does not want to study	496	319	225
Fails to get over the content of teaching	36	35	16
Conflicts	4	3	6
Is too lazy to study	66	14	8
Wants to work	22	13	4
Wants to attend a school for the youth	3		3
Wants to study at a vocational school	15	7	2
Parents do not allow	110	83	61
Complicated financial situation at the family	70	37	21
Asocial family	172	79	50
Works	69	23	3
Tramps	69	54	41
Poor state of health	128	22	6
Other reasons	37	131	69
Total:	1297	820	515

** The tables 7-14 provide information disclosed by the Social Policy Department under the Ministry of Education and Science*

Table No. 8*. Reasons for non-attendance of school by children under 16 years of age non-attending the school.

Regions:	Alytaus		Kauno		Klaipėdos		Marijampolės		Panevėžio		Šiaulių		Tauragės		Telšių		Utenos		Vilniaus	
Year/ Reasons for non-attendance	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999
Does not want to study	4	1	65	32	38	25	20	15	22	20	34	29	10	4	31	20	18	9	77	70
Fails to get over the content of teaching	2	2	10	5	3	5	3	3	1		7		1	1	4		1		3	
Conflicts			1	2	2							1				1				2
Is too lazy to study			4	7		1			1						3				6	
Wants to work	1		2	1	6						2				2					3
Wants to attend a school for the youth				1						1										1
Wants to study at a vocational school			3		1	1			1	1					1				1	
Parents do not allow	4	1	16	15	5	5	9	8	14	9	11	6		2	6		3	3	15	12
Complicated financial situation at the family	1		6	7	6	3	3		5		9	4	1	2	4	3			2	2
Asocial family		3	13	9	6	10	7	2	4	3	10	3	3		4	1	5	3	27	16
Works			5	1	3		3		1		1	1	1		4			1	5	
Tramps	1	1	7	11	5	10	5	1	2		8	4		3	5	2	3	1	18	8
Poor state of health	3		3			1	12		1	1		2			2	1	1	1		
Other	1	4	31	29	10	4	7	2	6	7	17	2	3		6		9	5	41	16

Table No. 8 provides the data about the distribution of pupils in accordance with reasons for non-attendance of schools in regions of the republic. The data produced unveil tendencies that are similar to the situation in the whole state: unwillingness of pupils to study, prohibition of parents, a disfunctional family, tramping seem to dominate. The aforementioned reasons are notable in the regions of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda and Siauliai in particular.

Table No. 9. Resume on children under 16 years of age non-attending the school in accordance with the year of birth*

Year of birth of pupils	Data		
	October 1, 1997	October 1, 1998	October 1, 1999
1981	1	4	
1982	163	129	
1983	638	369	75
1984	238	145	217
1985	96	55	89
1986	56	27	50
1987	33	14	26
1988	18	25	19
1989	20	10	13
1990	17	20	8
1991	17	22	6
1992			11
1993			1
Total:	1297	820	515

The table No. 9 provides distribution of pupils under 16 years of age and not attending school in accordance with the year of birth. The data produced show that In 1997 pupils born in 1983, i.e. of 14 years of age, formed the biggest group of pupils not attending school (49.2 percent), in 1998 the biggest group of pupils not attending school (45.0 percent) was the group of pupils born in the same year, i.e. pupils of 15 years of age. In 1999 the biggest group of pupils not attending school (42.1 percent) was formed by pupils born in 1984, i.e. of 15 years of age. Therefore, in 1997-1999 the biggest group of pupils not attending school was born in 1982-1985, i.e. pupils of 13-16 years of age. Should we analyse the data in accordance with regions (the table No. 10) we would notice the same tendency in the age of pupils not attending school under 16 years of age. The situation in the regions of Alytus and Taurage is comparatively good. The region of Marijampole stood out by specific tendencies in 1998 (14.5 percent of pupils not attending school were born in 1990). On the other hand, pupils of 7-10 years of age not attending school are registered all over the territory of the state, which proves that we may expect to have illiterate people among the residents of the state.

Table No. 10 *. Number of children under 16 years of age non-attending the school in regions.

Regions	Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	Total
Alytaus	1998		5	6	2					2		2			17
	1999			3	6	1	1	1							12
Kauno	1998		17	82	24	12	8	5	7	3	1	7			166
	1999			22	46	18	14	7	3	6	1		3		120
Klaipėdos	1998		23	42	14	2	1		2		1				85
	1999			11	30	12	4	1	5				2		65
Marijampolės	1998		14	29	6	3		2	4		10	1			69
	1999			9	12	4	1	2	1		1	1			31
Panevėžio	1998		12	23	9	4	4	1	2	1	1	1			58
	1999			6	15	6	2		2	2	4	3	2		42
Šiaulių	1998	1	12	43	23	6	5	3	2		3	1			99
	1999			3	28	7	3	5	3	1		1	1		52
Tauragės	1998		1	12	4	1			1						19
	1999			1	6	3		1	1						12
Telšių	1998		10	34	13	4	3		1		1	6			72
	1999			2	18	5	1	1			1				28
Utenos	1998		3	20	9	2	4					2			40
	1999			5	9	4	2	1					2		23
Vilniaus	1998	3	32	78	37	21	6	3	6	4	3	2			195
	1999			13	47	29	22	7	4	4	1	1	1	1	130

*Table No. 11 *. Summary of children under 16 years of age non-attending the school in accordance with grades.*

Grade	Data		
	October 1, 1997	October 1, 1998	October 1, 1999
Pre-school group			1
1 st	53	69	33
2 nd	28	24	11
3 rd	43	31	17
4 th	69	62	44
5 th	186	106	72
6 th	201	141	102
7 th	220	131	83
8 th	168	115	65
9 th	151	68	46
10 th	123	49	15
Special education			1
PTM group	55	24	24
Remarks (have not attended)			1
Total:	1297	820	515

The table No. 11 provides distribution of pupils not attending school under the age of 16 in accordance with grades. In 1997 the biggest number of pupils not attending school was in the 7th grade, in 1998 and 1999 - in the 6th grade. Situation at all grades of comprehensive school, at 6th-8th grades in particular is critical enough. Significant figures are registered at the 1st and the 4th grades. Should we link these data with the data on the number of pupils kept in the same class for a second/third year, we might come up with one of the reasons for non-attendance of school. Distribution of pupils not attending school in accordance with grades in regions is provided in the table No. 12.

Table No. 12 *. Distribution of children under 16 years of age non-attending the school in accordance with grades in regions.

Regions/Grades	Year	Preschool	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Spec. lavin.	PTM gr.	Remarks	Total
Alytaus	1998		4					3	3	3	2	2				17
	1999					1	3			1	4	3				12
Kauno	1998		13	8	9	13	28	29	14	22	16	2		12		166
	1999		3	1	7	11	19	20	20	14	10	4		11		120
Klaipėdos	1998			4	1	5	11	10	15	11	13	8		7		85
	1999		2	2	1	6	7	12	9	15	5	2		4		65
Marijampolės	1998		14	2	2	4	6	11	8	6	2	14				69
	1999		1		1		2	17	6	2	2					31
Panevėžio	1998		3	4	3	4	9	8	14	8	3	2				58
	1999		14	2	1	2	5	4	7	4	1			2		42
Šiaulių	1998		7	2	6	7	11	26	14	17	6	1		2		99
	1999		5	3	3	2	8	14	9	5	2		1			52
Tauragės	1998					2	1	4	4	7				1		19
	1999					1	2	4	3	2						12
Telšių	1998		7		2	9	11	12	12	4	5	10				72
	1999			1		1	5	6	5	3	7					28
Utenos	1998		5		1	2	3	8	9	5	5			2		40
	1999		2				5	1	5	2	1			6	1	23
Vilniaus	1998		16	4	7	16	26	30	38	32	16	10				195
	1999	1	33	11	17	44	72	102	83	65	46	15	1	24	1	515

Table No. 13. Summary of children under 16 years of age with disability non-attending the school in accordance with the year of birth.*

Year of birth of pupils	Data		
	October 1, 1997	October 1, 1998	October 1, 1999
1981	1	2	
1982	6	13	2
1983	47	63	8
1984	30	56	41
1985	37	55	37
1986	29	38	35
1987	23	40	36
1988	23	51	19
1989	25	41	30
1990	23	60	41
1991	23	66	38
1992			22
Total:	267	485	309

In accordance with the data of the Ministry of Education and Science the number of children with disability and not attending school formed 267 in 1997, 485 in 1998 and 309 in 1999 (see the table No. 13). In accordance with the year of birth distribution of these children and adolescents born in 1981-1992 and not attending school is comparatively even. On the other hand, the data of the table No. 14 show that the biggest number of these children and adolescents is in the regions of Vilnius, Kaunas and Panevezys. We would suppose that education of these children should be linked with the creation of education conditions corresponding to their demands, as well as with creation of possibilities and the most optimal use of existing possibilities.

Analysis of the data produced by different sources of statistical information leads to the conclusion that the results of a poll carried out by experts of the Department of Statistics and the data produced by the Social Policy Department of the Ministry of Education and Science collected in accordance with the order set out by the government in 1997 varied.

In accordance with calculations of the author, 56,600 pupils attended the 1st grade in 1992-1993. In 1998-1999 these pupils attended the 7th grade, which means that this number of pupils of the 7th grade should not differ much from the number of pupils who started attending the school if the distract from the former number the number of pupils kept in the same class for a second/third year, the pupils who left the school or dropped out, but add to that number the number of pupils who were transferred to the 7th grade. However, the data of only one grade differ by 3,600 pupils. It signifies that we may suggest that approximately 600 pupils dropped out of each grade on average each year. We have produced the example of only one grade. What is the situation with other classes? We still do not know whether we should blame the statistics or pupils drop out of school.

Table No. 14 *. Number of children under 16 years of age with disability non-attending the school in accordance with the year of birth.

Regions	Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	Total
Alytaus	1998.10.01			3	1	5		3	4	1	7	3		27
	1999.10.01			1	7	6		4	3	3	9	7	1	41
Kauno	1998.10.01		3	14	8	3	3	5	3	5	3	6		53
	1999.10.01		1	1	8	7	2	4	5	3	4	1	9	45
Klaipėdos	1998.10.01		1	5	6	3	3		3	2	1	2		26
	1999.10.01				4	1	1	1	1	1	1	2		12
Marijampolės	1998.10.01								4		8			12
	1999.10.01								1					1
Panevėžio	1998.10.01		2	1	9	4	4	4	3	5	4	9		45
	1999.10.01				4	2	4	5	2	6	3	11	10	47
Šiaulių	1998.10.01			10	9	7	5	9	8	6	11	9		74
	1999.10.01			2	4	2	4	3	1	4	7	1		28
Tauragės	1998.10.01					1			2					3
	1999.10.01					1								1
Telšių	1998.10.01			2	1			1	1	1		1		7
	1999.10.01		1	1			1	2	1	1		3		10
Utenos	1998.10.01		1	9	6	6	7	8	8	5	4	6		60
	1999.10.01				2	1	2	2		1	2	3		13
Vilniaus	1998.10.01	2	6	19	16	26	16	10	15	16	22	30		178
	1999.10.01			3	12	17	21	15	5	11	15	10	2	111

* Tables 7-14 provide information produced by the Social Policy Department under the Ministry of Education and Science.

IS THE YOUTH SCHOOL A WAY-OUT FOR PUPILS NOT ATTENDING THE SCHOOL?

Significant growth in the number of pupils not attending schools was highlighted as early as in the year 1993. The conception and regulations of Youth schools (YS) were drafted and approved in the same year. Furthermore, in 1995 and 2000 the regulations of youth schools underwent certain corrections. In compliance with the Lithuanian conception of education this type of school is designed for pupils who fail to take up with coevals at comprehensive schools, who lack motivation for learning or the self-determination of whom is dictated by social conditions. Youth school is an upbringing institution oriented to general development, provision of primary abilities of work, professional knowledge and skills through general practical activities.

The goal of the youth school is to give a helping hand to adolescents and the youth lacking motivation for learning to develop successfully through the creation of conditions for optimal self-actualisation, productive and socially significant self-expression.

The tasks of YS are to help adolescents and the youth to get to know themselves:

- to perceive their needs, interests, abilities, to learn to settle personal problems;
- to develop self-confidence, the need of self-development, optimal self-realisation, resistance to negative social impact;
- to develop motivation for learning, to stimulate the need to acquire at least the education provided by a comprehensive school;
- to aid to get ready for further studying, cultural and social life through various practical and theoretical activities corresponding to positive needs of the pupils, their interests, abilities, to enrich their personal experience.

In accordance with the conception and YS regulations, youth schools may provide education to pupils of 12-16 years of age from comprehensive schools and other education institutions provided that the pupils lack motivation for learning, cannot adapt themselves at comprehensive schools or other education institutions, do not learn and work anywhere. Until 1996 YS could be attended by youths of 16-18 years of age who could not attend comprehensive schools due to social reasons. That is, the aforementioned youths attended the 11th and the 12th grades at YS at that time.

Map No.1. *The map above marks schools and classes of the youth that have been created.*



Table No. 15. The number of schools of the youth and the pupils thereof in the period of 1993-2000.*

School year	Number of schools	Number of pupils
1993-1994	3	194
1994-1995	11	1032
1995-1996	19	1668
1996-1997	22	1939
1997-1998	23	2010
1998-1999	23	2225
1999-2000	24	2461

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The table No. 15 and the histogram illustrates the growth in the number of youth schools and the number of pupils thereof in 1993-2000. The data show that the number of youth schools grew from 3 to 24 and youth classes were being created in seven comprehensive schools during the aforementioned period of time. Distribution of schools within the territory of the state is shown on the map, which unveils that the number of schools of this type is insufficient in the regions of Klaipeda, Vilnius, Kaunas and Siauliai, which report on a significant number of pupils not attending school. Establishment of youth schools depends on the local demand, too. 2,461 pupils studied at youth schools in 1999-2000.

YS stands out by personalisation of the education process in a drive to diagnose and correct difficulties in learning of pupils. The schools provide general education in accordance with programmes set for comprehensive schools alongside with optional pre-vocational and additional education. Pre-vocational and additional education creates possibilities for the development of abilities of pupils, orienting them towards the selection of further object of studies or profession. It enables the pupils to make a more conscious choice of the way of life. The table No. 16 provides information about further studies of pupils following graduation of the basic school.

Table No. 16. Further education of pupils of the schools of the youth.*

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Graduated from the school of the youth and received a secondary education certificate (in percent as compared with the general number of pupils)	76.9	77.3	84.9	83.2
Continued the studies further (in percent)	64.5	69.3	76.8	77.1
Including the 10 th grade (in percent)	8.3	9.1	11.4	16.3
At vocational training institutions (in percent)	56.2	60.2	65.4	60.8

** Tables No. 15-16 provide the data produced by the Education Strategy Department under the Ministry of Education and Science.*

The data provided in the table No. 16 and the histogram disclose that more than three fourths of pupils graduated from youth schools in 1995 and 1996 and received a certificate of basic education. In 1997 and 1998 the number of graduates with certificates awarded formed 84.9 percent and 83.2 percent of the total number of pupils respectively. Due to a shift to ten-year education system in 1999-2000 the data about further education of pupils are not comprehensive enough.

On the other hand, the data available prove that children and youngsters who have not attended school or were absent at classes regularly have been turned back to the education system through personalised education. Furthermore, they have achieved comparatively good results and enjoyed possibilities of further education.

Presence of pupils at youth schools contributes to the solution of social and economic problems of the state as well. In accordance with the data of the labour force research, in 1997 - 1999 jobless rate among the youth exceeded the average jobless rate in the state by 1.5 - 2 times. The highest unemployment rate was registered within the group of youngsters of 14-19 years of age. One in two young job-seekers registered with territorial labour exchanges has no

profession and has graduated only from the basic or secondary school. For example, 23 percent of job-seekers registered at the labour exchange office of the district of Didziasalis in the beginning of 2000 were individuals with only basic education, i.e. they have not graduated from a comprehensive school and their integration into the labour market is a huge problem (Pocius A., Okuneviciute L., 2000).

In 1999 3,300 adolescents (of 14-17 years of age) were accused of crimes. Adolescents accounted for 13 percent of all individuals accused of any crimes. Majority of the aforementioned adolescents (95 percent) were males. One in 65 youngsters of the aforementioned age group commits a crime on average. In 1999 almost two-thirds of individuals who committed a crime did not work or study anywhere (Social Development of Lithuania, 2000).

To sum up, we may state that the education policy oriented towards stimulation of self/education of pupils and restoration of motivation for learning creates conditions for the solution of problems related with further education of the youth as well as social and economic problems of the youth related with delinquency, drug addiction, unemployment, social isolation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- When taking solutions the state politicians should consider comprehensive information about the repetition of a school class by pupils, failure of learning, interchange of schools, removal of pupils from schools, risk groups of pupils and the number of children not attending school.
- The authorities shall accumulate various information about children dropping out of the education process and carry out regular researches that would provide information to teachers and the public about the experience of these pupils: social life, social-economic situation, climate of the school, the outlook of various professions and eventual employment, relations with other people and other institutions, operating preventive programmes.
- State politicians should define what should the education of a young resident of Lithuania should be in the 21st century in order to make that resident ready for independent life and able to take part in social, economic, cultural and political life of the state.
- State politicians should admit that preschool development is a part of education system of particular importance, which should be accompanied by improvement of preparing of a child for school and by prevention of drop-out of children from school.
- Problems of drop-out from the education system should be settled through co-ordination of the education and social policy of the state.
- The state should initiate the creation of new programmes and education strategies for risk groups and various groups of individuals who have dropped out of the education system.
- When defining the notions of success and failure at school the index of school quality should signify the responsibility of school for the maintenance of each child and qualitative development of his abilities.

Co-ordination of education and social support, solution of problems related with keeping of pupils in the same class for a second year or drop-out of the education system should be accompanied by making further investments or by making new investments in the following programmes:

- Support to impoverished families;
- Catering;
- Upbringing of newborns;
- Pre-schooling;
- Improvement of hygiene conditions;
- Creation of a school community and co-operation;
- Education of parents;
- Reconstruction of schools and classes;
- Optimization of delivery of pupils to schools and allocation of schools;
- Creation of alternative schools;
- Arrangement of new education programmes, text books and other teaching materials;
- Education of teachers and improvement of their professional skills;
- Provision with text books and their allocation;
- Creation of a system of examinations and evaluation;
- Provision of individual teaching, psychological consultations;
- Reading/writing;
- Development of social and general abilities;
- Outlook of future studies and professional career;
- Additional out-of-school upbringing;
- Summer activities and rest, etc.

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